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BY

LIONEL GILES, M.A., D.Litt.

A Paper read before the CHINA SOCIETY *at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on March 29, 1917*

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CH'IU CHIN: A CHINESE HEROINE*

By Lionel Giles, M.A., D.Litt.

The revolution that changed the face of China in 1911 was only the culminating wave of a movement which had grown steadily in volume for several years, and was heralded by a number of sporadic outbreaks the significance of which was not altogether apparent at the time. The real awakening of China may be said to date from the disastrous war with Japan in 1894, which was soon followed by territorial agression on the part of the great European Powers. The Reform Edicts of Kuang Hsü seemed to open a door to the new aspirations of the Chinese people, but all hopes were dashed by the return of the Empress-Dowager to power. The "Boxer" explosion of 1900 was directed at first against the throne, and it was only by consummate craft on the part of the Manchu Government that it was turned into a war of extermination against the foreigner. When China emerged, broken and breathless, from the unequal fray, saddled with a crushing indemnity, bankrupt and discredited as a civilized nation, she realized the extent to which she had been hoodwinked by her rulers. The anti-foreign animus gradually died away, for the Chinese knew that the real enemy they had to reckon with was within their gates. It became the aim of every patriot to shake off the Manchu incubus

* A paper read before the China Society at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on March 29, 1917, Mrs. Archibald Little in the chair.

which had been the cause of their bitterest humiliation. The task, however, was one that might well appal the stoutest heart. In a land of great distances like China, the difficulty of accomplishing a successful revolution is immense. Popular discontent is like a flame that has to be assiduously tended and watched—fanned in one part of the country, controlled and restrained in another—until everything is ready for a simultaneous and overmastering conflagration. In the years following the return of the Manchu Court to Peking the political atmosphere was charged with electricity. As Victor Hugo says of France after the restoration of the Bourbons, " Un certain frisson révolutionnaire courait vaguement." Secret societies multiplied rapidly, but too often acted independently of one another; hence the isolated outbreaks that occurred were generally premature, and came to an untimely end for want of co-operation. The year 1907 brought forth several such uprisings, one of which, ineffectual though it was at the moment, is likely to find a permanent place in history, if only because it was engineered from start to finish by a woman.

Ch'iu Chin was the daughter of an official whose native place was Shaohsing in the province of Chekiang. This city is mentioned by Marco Polo under the name of Tanpiju: " When you leave Kinsay (the modern Hangchow) and travel a day's journey to the south-east, through a plenteous region, passing a succession of dwellings and charming gardens, you reach the city of Tanpiju, a great, rich and fine city, under Kinsay." Owing to its numerous canals it is sometimes styled, like Soochow, " the Venice of China." The surname Ch'iu means " autumn," and the personal name Chin " a lustrous gem." At a later period she took the sobriquet Ching-hsiung, which means " Vie-with-male," and she was also known as Chien-hu Nü-chieh, " Female Champion of the Mirror Lake." At the age of eighteen, Ch'iu Chin was married to a gentleman named Wang, and went with him to Peking, where she gave birth to a boy and a girl. Hers was not a temperament, however, that could

resign itself gladly to the placid joys of domestic life. During the Boxer crisis of 1900, when she was an eye-witness of the mournful events at Peking, she was heard to exclaim with a sigh: "We mortals must grapple with difficulties and dangers in order to show what stuff we are made of. How can people spend all their days amidst the petty worries of domestic concerns?" She had received the education of a scholar, wrote poetry, and held advanced views on the emancipation of women. In a popular Chinese account of her life, published some years later,* we find the following résumé of a public lecture which she delivered on the subject of foot-binding:

"We women," she said, "have for thousands of years past been subjected to a system of repression, and at no time have we enjoyed the smallest measure of independence. Rigidly bound by the ancient rules prescribing the Three Obediences and the Four Virtues, we were unable to utter the faintest word of protest. Into this point, however, I will not enter at present. What I wish to say is this: we women, who have had our feet bound from early childhood, have suffered untold pain and misery, for which our parents showed no pity. Under this treatment our faces grew pinched and thin, and our muscles and bones were cramped and distorted. The consequence is that our bodies are weak and incapable of vigorous activity, and in everything we do we are obliged to lean on others. Being thus necessarily dependent on external aid, we find ourselves, after marriage, subjected to the domination of men, just as though we were their household slaves. All our energies are confined to the home, where we are occupied in cutting out clothes, cooking and preparing food, making tea and boiling rice, sprinkling and sweeping, waiting on our husbands, and handing them basin and towel. In any important business we are prevented from taking the least part. Should a guest arrive, we are obliged to make ourselves scarce and hide in our private apartments. We are not allowed to inquire deeply

* Procured for me in Peking by my friend, Major W. Perceval Yetts.

into any subject, and should we venture to speak at any length in reply to some argument, we are told that our sex is volatile and shallow. My sisters, do you know where the fault lies that has brought us to this pass? It is all due to women's lack of energy and spirit. We ourselves drew back in the first instance, and by-and-by that came to be regarded as an immutable rule of conduct. Sisters, let us to-day investigate the causes which have led to this want of spirit and energy among women. May it not be because we insist on binding up our girls' feet at an early age, speaking of their "three-inch golden lilies" and their "captivating little steps"? May it not be, I say, that this process of foot-binding is what has sapped and destroyed all our energy and spirit? To-day my blood is up, and I want to stir your blood as well, my sisters, and rouse you to a sense of your degradation. All women should, in the first place, refuse to adorn themselves with paint and powder, or trick themselves out in seductive guise, realizing that every human being has his own natural countenance given to him by God. Secondly, you must never bind your feet again, nor utter nonsensical verses like:

> Contending in beauty with their three-inch feet and slender bodies, light enough to flit over the waves,
> The gentle swaying of their willow waists reminding one of the flight of a swallow.

"Do not wrong your intelligence by thus dissipating your precious strength, but rather bewail the lot of those unhappy maidens who for thousands of years have been shedding tears of blood. In bringing forward this question of unbound feet, my sisters, I want you to realize that the result of having feet of the natural size will be to abolish the evils attendant on injured bones and muscles and an enfeebled constitution —surely a cause for unbounded rejoicing. I feel it my duty to lose no time in rooting out this vile custom amongst women. For where, in all the five great continents, will you find a single country that follows this Chinese practice of foot-binding? And yet we, who were born and brought up

in China, look upon it as the most civilized country in the world! If one day we succeed in wiping out this horrible blot on our civilization, our bodies will begin to grow stronger, and the steps we take in walking will become a pleasure instead of a pain. Having thus regained their natural energy, the whole sex will progress without difficulty, and an endless store of happiness will be built up for thousands of generations of women yet unborn. But if you shrink from this reform, and wish to retain the pretty sight of small feet beneath your petticoats, you will remain imprisoned to the end of the chapter in the seclusion of your inner apartments, quite devoid of any strength of character, and it will be impossible to manifest the native brilliancy of the female sex. I earnestly hope and trust that you, my sisters, will bring about a thorough reform of all the ancient abuses, rouse yourselves to act with resolution, and refuse to submit to the domination of man, asserting your own independent authority, and so ordering things that the status of women may rise daily higher, while their dependence on others grows less and less. Let there be thorough enlightenment on the subject of foot-binding, and progress in the matter of equal rights for men and women will surely follow."

That matrimony as it is understood in China should have proved irksome to such an ardent and self-reliant temperament is no matter for surprise. Husband and wife agreed to an amicable separation some two or three years after the Boxer rising, and Ch'iu Chin, having lost the whole of her capital in speculation, through misplaced confidence in an unworthy person, seems to have conceived the idea of educating herself on modern lines in order to be better equipped for the struggle of life. Accordingly, she raised some money by the sale of her hair ornaments and other jewellery and prepared to start for Tokyo, a centre to which Chinese students were then flocking in great numbers. An incident which occurred before she left Peking throws some light on her character as well as on her political sympathies. A member of the Reform Party of 1898, who had surrendered

himself to stand his trial for complicity in the measures of that memorable year, was languishing in the prison of the Board of Punishments, where, for want of funds to expedite the hearing of his case, it is probable that he might have remained indefinitely. On hearing of his plight, Ch'iu Chin sent a large portion of the sum which she had set aside for her own education to help him in his hour of need. With noble delicacy of feeling she enjoined on the messenger not to reveal the name of the donor, so that until the prisoner had been released, he was unaware to whom he was so deeply indebted.

Ch'iu Chin sailed for Japan towards the end of April, 1904. As one of her biographers puts it, she was " quite alone, and oppressed by a thousand anxieties." It was the first time she had left China; both the country and the people to which she was journeying were strange to her, and their language unintelligible. And it must be remembered that Chinese women at that date were only just beginning to throw off the age-long shackles of convention. To most Chinese eyes her enterprise must have appeared in the light of a grave impropriety. Truly, it was a great adventure on which this dauntless young woman of twenty-eight was embarking. When she arrived in Tokyo, sheer force of character soon brought her to the front. We find her a member of the debating club attached to the hostelry for Chinese students, training herself as a speaker, and, a little later on, forming a secret society with ten other ladies, having for its aim the overthrow of the Manchu Dynasty. She also became acquainted with an ardent young reformer named T'ao Ch'êng-chang (who was afterwards to write the most detailed and reliable account of her life) and several of his friends, who had already been engaged in sowing the seeds of revolution throughout the province of Chekiang. In the spring of 1905 our heroine's slender pittance was almost exhausted, and it became an urgent necessity for her to return to China in order to raise fresh funds for the continuance of her studies. Before she left, she had an important conversation

with T'ao Ch'êng-chang, and begged for a letter of introduction to the leaders of the revolutionary party, so that she herself might join in the work. After some hesitation on his part she obtained what she wished, and in July she had her first interview with Hsü Hsi-lin, a man of fierce energy and fanatical temper, whose fortunes were thenceforward irretrievably linked with her own. Having been formally enrolled in the ranks of the Kuang-fu (Glorious Restoration) Society—a branch of the T'ung-mêng Hui, or Sworn Brotherhood, founded by Dr. Sun Yat-sen—she made a tour of South-east Chekiang, accompanied by her friend T'ao, and visited various revolutionary leaders.

September saw her back again in Tokyo, and there she seems to have met Sun Yat-sen himself. A severe illness prostrated her for more than a month, but as soon as she was convalescent she entered the Jissen Jo Gakkō, a Training College for Women. Her studies, however, were soon to be cut short by an unexpected occurrence. The Manchu Government had got wind of the revolutionary plots being hatched in the Japanese capital, and at their request a number of stringent police regulations were put in force against the Chinese students. A storm of indignation immediately arose, and Ch'iu Chin, ever ready to fight against oppression, was active in organizing mass meetings at which she herself was one of the principal speakers. She was also the moving spirit in the formation of a league the members of which pledged themselves to return to China unless the obnoxious regulations were rescinded. After a time things quieted down, and the majority of the students yielded to the force of circumstances. But Ch'iu Chin's indomitable spirit refused to be coerced; she kept her word, and shook the dust of Japan off her feet for ever.

Two of her friends, Mr. T'ao and another, met her on her return to Shanghai, and saw her off on the final stage of her journey home. Knowing her to be an accomplished scholar, they begged for some autograph composition as a memento, and Ch'iu Chin responded by copying out, before she left

Shanghai, a small volume containing the product of her muse—that is to say, 150 short pieces of poetry of various kinds. It is to this fortunate incident that we probably owe the preservation of her poems, for after her death the manuscript was printed and published. I have here a copy of the second edition, prepared in 1910, which was sent to me by an anonymous donor in that year. It bears the title, " The Literary Remains of the Heroine Ch'iu," and prefixed to it is the biography by T'ao Ch'êng-chang already mentioned, with a postscript containing further details by Mr. Kung. A large proportion of these poems are inspired by flowers and other objects of Nature, and their delicate fragrance would hardly survive translation into English. Others are addressed to various friends, notably the lady Hsü Tzŭ-hua, a poetess like herself, of whom we shall hear more presently. Only a few are political, or concerned with current events, as, for example, the stirring lines in which she celebrates the naval victory of Japan over Russia. I must content myself with offering you a single specimen, turned as literally as possible into prose. It is the last in the book, written in irregular metre after the fashion of an ode, and it illustrates Ch'iu Chin's ardent aspirations for the full emancipation of her sex.

ON THE STRUGGLE FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

We of the female sex are in love with liberty:
Let us pledge our resolve to win liberty in a bumper of wine!
By the dispensation of Nature, men and women are endowed with equal rights;
How can we be content to abide in our inferior position?
With all our energy we must raise ourselves up, and wash away, once for all, the shame and degradation of the past.
If only men will acquiesce in our becoming their comrades,
They shall see our white hands toiling in the great task of winning back our beloved country.
Full of dishonour is the ancient custom
By which women are allotted to their respective mates like cattle.
Now that the light of dawn is visible, ushering in a new era of civilization,
Man's claim to stand alone, usurping the first place,
And to hold the other sex in slavish subjection, must be utterly abolished.
Wisdom, understanding, mental culture—all will come by dint of training and practice.
O my heroic countrywomen, shoulder your responsibilities!
I am confident that you will not flinch from the task that awaits you.

These verses—from which it must be confessed that most of the beauty and power have evaporated in my feeble translation—rang like a trumpet blast through the literary and political world of China at a time when the land was still groaning under the humiliation of a foreign yoke. The veiled allusion to the coming revolution, and the eagerness of Chinese women to take their share in that struggle, shows the direction in which Ch'iu Chin's thoughts were tending. In truth, she soon realized that the winning of political liberty was the necessary preliminary to sex emancipation.

In the meantime, she had her own living to make. In February, 1906, she was recommended for the post of teacher to a girls' school at Nanzin, in the extreme north of Chekiang, but was rejected in favour of another applicant, Madame Hsü Tzŭ-hua. Ch'iu Chin was much annoyed, but curiosity seems to have impelled her to call on her successful rival; no sooner had they met than each confessed herself vanquished, and their sole regret was that their meeting had been delayed so long. Madame Hsü insisted on keeping her new friend with her to share the work of the school, and for the next six months they lived together in the closest intimacy. But the fever of revolution was already in Ch'iu Chin's blood, and the drudgery of a school was unsuited to her restless and ambitious temper. She paid frequent visits to Shanghai, helped in the foundation of a new Chinese College there, and spared herself no exertion in working for its success. She also opened a branch of the Kuang-fu Secret Society at premises in North Szechuen Road, and gradually formed a large circle of acquaintance among the revolutionary leaders, who were not slow to recognize her transcendent abilities as well as the flame of disinterested patriotism which burned within her. Hsü Hsi-lin was now an expectant official at Anking, where he had won the complete confidence of the Manchu Governor Ên-ming. From this coign of vantage he was able to act as a spy in the interests of the revolutionary party, and was in constant communication with Ch'iu Chin and another fellow-towns-

man named Ch'ên Po-p'ing. The latter was a somewhat younger man, of reckless bravery, who acted as a loyal henchman to Hsü Hsi-lin, and appears to have been especially devoted to our heroine. In conjunction with him and a few others she hired a house in Hongkew for the manufacture of bombs. Doubtless owing to their inexperience in the handling of dynamite, an explosion took place one day, which might have had the most serious consequences; as it was, Ch'ên was injured in the eye and Ch'iu Chin in the arm, and both narrowly escaped being arrested by the police.

Checked in this direction, her activities soon found a new outlet. With the help of her friend Hsü Tzŭ-hua, she started the *Chung Kuo Nü Pao*, or Chinese women's journal, a small monthly magazine published at 91, North Szechuen Road. Through the kindness of Mr. Ch'ên Kuo-ch'üan of Shanghai, a copy of the second number of this interesting periodical has come into my hands, and I think I cannot do better than give you a brief conspectus of its contents. First comes a portrait of the editor—Ch'iu Chin herself—unfortunately a poor photograph, which, however, gives some idea of her personal appearance. Then, after the table of contents, comes a general statement of the aims and scope of the new publication. The first three articles are entitled " Notes on Moral Philosophy," " Female Education," and " A Happy New Year " (China New Year, 1907, had fallen twelve days before the number went to press). After this follows the second instalment of an article, " Hints on Nursing," translated from the English by Ch'iu Chin. This occupies ten pages, and deals with the temperature and ventilation of the sick-room, invalid diet, bed-sores, sleep, and the use of the clinical thermometer. We learn from one of her biographers that Ch'iu Chin was an omnivorous reader, and here we have further proof of the wide range of her interests and her remarkable appetite for knowledge. Incidentally, it appears that she had somehow acquired a very considerable knowledge of the English language. Next we have the second chapter of a story called " The Independent

Maiden," by a lady writer. This is followed by two collections of poetry—" Jade Fragments " and " Desolate Mountains "—including four poems by our heroine; and there are also the verses quoted above, on Women's Rights, set to music. The last section is devoted to the cause of female education. It includes an essay urging the necessity of organization and mutual co-operation amongst women, notes on the practical results that had already been achieved, and items of news from various quarters. On the whole, this journalistic venture must be pronounced of high literary quality. It compares favourably with the average woman's paper in this country, and the only fault that can be found with it is that it was somewhat too ambitious in its aim. Very few Chinese women at that date can have been sufficiently educated to appreciate the intellectual fare that was set before them, and there is reason to believe that most of the subscribers belonged to the other sex.

Clouds were now gathering apace on the political horizon, and suddenly, in the winter of 1906, the storm burst. An armed uprising took place in Kiangsi, and a meeting was hurriedly convened at Shaohsing in order to debate the question of sending military aid. But it was already too late. No other province showed any sign of moving, and the insurrection fizzled out after the vain sacrifice of many gallant lives. Ch'iu Chin had attended the conference and charged herself with the direction of affairs in Chekiang. She immediately embarked on the perilous enterprise of touring through the interior of the province in order to organize a sympathetic revolt. With the exception of the northern part, Chekiang is almost wholly mountainous, and there are even now no railways. The exhausting nature of travel under such conditions can well be imagined. After a short stay at Kinhwa, Ch'iu Chin returned to Shaohsing, and there she first heard the bad news from Kiangsi—the execution of many of her personal friends, the arrest and imprisonment of others. All hope of co-operation was thus destroyed. It was a staggering blow, but Chin's ardour was only height-

ened by misfortune. It was now, so we are told, amid the wreck of her hopes, that she secretly determined to reanimate the drooping spirits of her party and to bring about a revolution single-handed. Her opportunity soon came. The Ta-t'ung College of Physical Culture at Shaohsing was in need of a head, and Ch'iu Chin's prestige and ability marked her out as the fittest incumbent. Amazing as it may seem to those who knew what China was only twenty years ago, this young woman was publicly appointed Principal, and the Prefect himself, accompanied by the two district magistrates, came in person to the College in order to present her with a complimentary address. This Prefect, Kuei-fu by name, who was a Manchu, evidently had no inkling of the propaganda which was being carried on under his very nose, nor could he have suspected that the seemingly innocent institution which he was visiting had already become the centre and focus of a dangerous agitation.

Little more than four months of life now remained to Ch'iu Chin, but they were filled with feverish activity. In this short time she reorganized the Kuang-fu Society from top to bottom, making frequent journeys between Shaohsing, Hangchow, and Shanghai, and turning her attention especially to the army and to the student population in those centres.

Mr. Ch'ên Ch'ü-ping has preserved for us an interesting account of her last two meetings with Madame Hsü, which may be given in his own words: " On March 17, 1907, the two friends made an excursion up the Phœnix Hill at Hangchow, where they mourned together in the Old Pavilion of the Southern Sung, shedding tears as they gazed down upon the Western Lake. Chin then proceeded to make a secret survey of the roads and paths leading in and out of the city, and drew a map of the country for military use, in order that she might be prepared for eventualities. Madame Hsü, seeing that Chin was much concerned because the moment for action had not yet arrived, rallied her jocularly on the subject, and Chin listened in silence. Then they went

together to visit Yo Fei's tomb,* which they gazed upon with reverence, pacing up and down until it grew dark, and still unable to tear themselves away.

" Madame Hsü chaffed her friend again, saying: ' I suppose you would like to be buried in this spot when you die?' Chin replied with a sigh: ' To have the privilege of being buried here would be too much happiness.' ' If you die,' said Madame Hsü, ' I will see to your funeral. But it might happen that I should die first. Will you in that case be able to have me buried here?' To which Chin laughingly replied: ' If I find that it can be done cheaply, I will.' So they bade each other farewell and separated. About three months later, after the revolutionaries at Shaohsing had had their posts allotted to them, Chin went to Shanghai in order to make the final arrangements with Hsü Hsi-lin and the other leaders, and took Shihmen (where Hsü Tzŭ-hua lived) on her way. In the middle of the night she knocked at the door of her friend's house, and on being admitted, she announced that the rising was about to take place, but that she was in difficulties owing to the exhaustion of her funds. Madame Hsü immediately turned out her jewel-case and gave her the contents, whereat Chin was very grateful, and taking two kingfisher bracelets off her arms, she handed them to Hsü Tzŭ-hua, saying: ' As one never knows what may happen, I should like you to have these as a memento of bygone days.' And again, when about to resume her journey, she said to her friend: ' Of course I can trust you to keep the promise that you gave me at Yo Fei's grave?' Madame Hsü replied sadly: ' If it should ever come to that, my dearest, you may rest assured that I will find a way to meet your wishes.' Thus, with gloomy forebodings, they parted."

Meanwhile, a second tour through Chekiang had satisfied

* Yo Fei (A.D. 1103-1141) was a brilliant General who distinguished himself under the Southern Sung Dynasty by his successes against the Chin Tartars, then masters of the whole of North China. Having incurred the enmity of the traitorous Minister, Ch'in Kuei, who had sold himself to the Tartars, he was arrested and thrown into prison, where shortly afterwards he was officially reported to have " died."

Ch'iu Chin that Kinhwa and several neighbouring towns were ripe for an upheaval, and the main difficulty now was to restrain the eagerness of the revolutionaries, so that the outbreaks in different parts of the province might be as far as possible simultaneous. It was planned, however, that the main body of insurgents at Shaohsing should wait until the Manchu troops in Hangchow had sallied forth against Kinhwa and Chuchow, in order to make a surprise attack on Hangchow when denuded of its defenders. It was also arranged that a party of soldiers and students should co-operate with them from within the city. In case of failure, the army was to march back, effect a junction with the Kinhwa contingent, and eventually strike a blow at the important city of Anking on the Yangtse. The date of the rising was fixed for July 19, but, as usual in such cases where there is so much gunpowder lying about, the explosion was premature. It was hastened by the action of one of the leaders, who in the middle of June began hastily concentrating his troops between Tungyang and Chenghsien, and was foolish enough to unfurl the revolutionary standard. This precipitated the crisis. On July 1, the insurrection broke out at Wuyi, not far from Kinhwa, where further outbreaks occurred two days later. Ch'iu Chin immediately despatched Ch'ên Po-p'ing to Anking to apprise Hsü Hsi-lin of the state of affairs. He, fearing the consequences of delay, seized his opportunity and slew Ên-ming, the Governor, on July 6.

It is hard to see how this crime can be justified, even as a stroke of policy. Its immediate effect was the arrest and execution of Hsü Hsi-lin and Ch'ên Po-p'ing, both of whose lives might have proved most useful at this juncture. It alienated a number of moderate men, who, though detesting Manchu rule, were unable to reconcile themselves to methods of assassination. Worst of all, it succeeded in thoroughly alarming the Government and opening its eyes to the existence of a formidable and widespread conspiracy. A strict search was at once instituted for all members of revolutionary clubs, and the Ta-t'ung College fell under suspicion. It

appears that secret information, incriminating Ch'iu Chin, was given to the Prefect of Shaohsing, Kuei-fu, by a member of the local gentry, Hu Tao-nan, who had previously had a passage of arms with our heroine in which he had come off second best. Madame Hsü speaks of " the unguarded way in which she would make cutting remarks " as having led to her death. Anyhow, the affront was never forgiven, and her accuser chose this dastardly method of paying off old scores. Kuei-fu lost no time in taking action. He crossed over to Hangchow by night and made a personal report on the situation to the Governor, Chang Tsêng-yang, after which he returned to Shaohsing.

It was only on July 9 that Ch'iu Chin herself heard of the abortive attempt at Anking, and it is recorded that she sat down in her room and wept. For the first time her iron nerve seemed to be shaken. There can be little doubt that she was privy to Hsü Hsi-lin's intentions; but, whether or no she condoned political assassination in general as a means for securing national liberty, she must have realized that in this instance it was a tragic blunder, likely to prove fatal to the cause which she had at heart. Her native resolution, however, soon reasserted itself. A council of war was held by the students in Shaohsing on the 10th, at which it was proposed to rise at once, kill the Prefect, and get possession of the town. This desperate scheme would have rendered impossible the attack on Hangchow, already fixed for the 19th, and Chin preferred to take the risk of waiting, in order to carry out her original plan. On the 12th, at daybreak, some students arrived with a secret missive from Hangchow, in which it was stated that the Manchu troops were already in motion, and that some counter-stroke must be decided on at once. Another mass meeting of the students was convened in the Ta-t'ung College building, but in the end no decision was arrived at, and a large number of them, abandoning the cause, went back to their homes. The next day, early in the afternoon, a body of scouts returned with the report that a Manchu regiment was marching on Shaohsing.

Chin sent them out again to reconnoitre, and they brought back the news that the enemy had crossed over to the east bank of the river. This time she saw that the news was only too true, and shortly afterwards the soldiers had entered the city. The students held a last hurried meeting, and all urged Chin to make her escape, but she made no reply. When the Manchus arrived in front of the College they did not dare to force an entry immediately. There were still some dozen or more students remaining on the premises. Of these, a few got out by the back door and escaped by swimming across the canal, while the others rushed out of the front door and faced the enemy with weapons in their hands. The Manchu soldiers were taken by surprise, and a number of them were killed or wounded by the students, two of whom were also slain. Chin remained sitting in an inner apartment, and was taken prisoner, together with six others, whose names have been recorded by T'ao Ch'êng-chang. The next day, when brought before the district magistrate, she steadfastly refused to utter a word for fear of implicating her associates, but only traced a single line of poetry: "*Ch'iu yü ch'iu fêng ch'ou sha jên*" ("Autumn rain and autumn wind fill the heart with melancholy sore").* Sentence was pronounced, and on the morning of July 15, at daybreak, she was executed near the Pavilion at Shaohsing. It is said that a rosy cloud was floating overhead at the time, and a chilly north wind blowing. The executioners as well as the onlookers were all shuddering with emotion, but Ch'iu Chin herself went tranquilly to her doom, and even when her head lay severed from the trunk the expression of her face still remained unaltered.

The news of Ch'iu Chin's martyrdom was received with an outburst of grief, mingled with horror, not only by her friends, but by all who believed in the cause for which her life had been sacrificed. Public opinion was stirred to its depths, and thousands of elegies bewailing her fate were

* This contains a play on her surname Ch'iu, which, as I have said, means "autumn."

circulated in all parts of China. Perhaps the most beautiful and pathetic of these was composed by Madame Hsü Tzŭ-hua, after she had recovered from the illness caused by the shock of her friend's death. I regret that I have not time to give it in full, and must content myself with quoting a few extracts:

"Alas, Hsüan-ch'ing!* All too great was thy love of glory, and now calamity has overtaken thee.
Many indeed were those who admired and loved thee, but many, too, regarded thee with jealousy and spite.
The calumnies of slanderous tongues have brought thee to thy lamentable doom.
It is the nature of the enlightened to be full of ardent zeal, of the stupid and obstinate to be full of slander.
In what family will a girl again bring herself to seek education?
In what household will a wife again be willing to become a leader of men?

* * * * * * * * *

Alas, Hsüan-ch'ing! 'Twas only last year, in the second month of spring, that I first came to know thee,
With thy pointed sallies in conversation, thy lively wit which always found its way home,
Thy heroism and sense of duty, thy lofty indomitable spirit,
Thy melancholy songs, thy sword-play, thy conviviality, thy skill in composition.
Once, in turning out thy travelling trunks, I espied a copy of thy writings—
Works full of zeal for humanity, noble sentiments, ardent enthusiasm, and deep-seated emotion—
And lo! I was overcome with an inarticulate yearning of sympathy over thy talents and aspirations, which proclaimed thee a heroine among women.

* * * * * * * * *

Alas, Hsüan-ch'ing! 'Tis but a little while since I parted from thee, and the sound of thy voice is with me still, thy smiling face is still in my mind's eye.
Never shall I see thee more! . . . How can I restrain my grief?
Who will gather up thy jade-like bones? Who will prepare thy fragrant tomb?
Who will call back thy wandering spirit? Who will demand justice for thy grievous wrong?
Man's life on earth may only be one great dream,
But if it be an evil dream like this, the pain that wrings my breast is but increased.
Alas, Hsüan-ch'ing! the wheel comes round full circle, bringing with it success and failure, fulness and decay;
To escape death there is no other way than never to have been born.
Truly, thou hast passed away before me, but neither am I immortal. Sooner or later I must rejoin thee.

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* Ch'iu Chin's literary style.

If my tears fall fast like rain, it is only that thinking of the days gone by, the bond of our common studies, the intimacy of our friendship,
Makes my heart swell with emotion. . . . How can I ever forget those things?
Clever as thou wert in life, after death thou surely hast an angel's intelligence.
O spirit of Ch'iu Chin! come back to me and ease my aching heart."

None of Chin's relatives had the courage to come forward and claim her body, which accordingly lay exposed in the Pavilion until a charitable institution provided a coffin and buried her on the adjacent hill. But her devoted friend, mindful of her promise, in spite of the danger determined that she should have a more worthy resting-place. One night in January, 1908, she made a secret journey to the spot, had the coffin disinterred, and brought it back with her to the Western Lake near Hangchow, where she and another great friend of the dead woman's, Wu Chih-ying, had bought a piece of land alongside the tomb of the Sung Dynasty hero, Yo Fei. Here she was buried in state, and shortly afterwards a society was formed with the express object of carrying on her life-work. But in the autumn the Manchu authorities caused the tomb to be levelled to the ground, and ordered Chin's brother to remove the coffin to Shaohsing. In 1909 her husband died, whereupon her son, then a boy of about fourteen, came all the way from Hunan and transported his mother's remains back to that province. Two years later came the dawn of the new era, which she had striven for so passionately, but had not lived to see, heralded by the guns at Wuchang. It was felt that a national memorial was the only fitting tribute to one who had worked and suffered so heroically for the nation's cause, and so in the summer of 1912 she was finally laid to rest by the Western Lake, the funeral being attended by a large concourse of people. On the site of the old grave, near the Hsi-ling Bridge, a pavilion was erected, bearing the name *Fêng Yü T'ing* (Wind and Rain Pavilion), which may be seen by anyone who has occasion to visit that lovely spot. The commemorative inscription on her tomb was composed by Hsü Tzŭ-hua and written in calligraphic style for the engraver

by Wu Chih-ying. A facsimile has been published in book form, and from this, sent to me with several other documents by Mr. Ch'ên Kuo-ch'üan, I have drawn many details of her career. Her character is there summed up in a few sentences which will form an appropriate close to this brief biographical sketch: " In tracing the acts of her life, if we find that her lack of conventionality in small matters, her independent attitude and impatience of authority, her delight in wine and her fondness for sword-play, cannot be made to square exactly with rigid canons of conduct, yet on the other hand her inmost nature was upright and conscientious in the extreme. . . . Although she loved to be independent, it is certain that she never, from first to last, overstepped the bounds of morality and virtue. . . . This inscription is engraved on her tomb as a memorial for after generations, to let them know that the spilling of patriotic blood on hollow pretexts did not cease with the Southern Sung period. Then, reflecting on her noble example, as they pace to and fro with upraised or downcast head, they will be moved to shed hot tears, and find it hard to tear themselves away; thus may her tomb stand imperishable even as the tomb of the princely Yo Fei."

DISCUSSION ON THE FOREGOING PAPER

In her opening remarks, the Chairman (Mrs. Archibald Little) said that the paper was of particular interest at the present moment, when women were winning their spurs, so to speak, in this country. She hoped that the audience would regard Dr. Giles's heroine as an example of the extraordinary courage and ability of Chinese girls, which had astounded her again and again. Once, at a gathering of the fashionable world at Soochow, she saw a poorly-dressed girl get up and move the audience as none of the other speakers had moved it, and enforce her views upon them with the greatest ease. Some of the audience might also remember that great gathering at Shanghai when speech after speech was made after the first revolution. Nothing went really home to the hearts of those present until a young girl came forward. Afterwards some missionary spoke to her, and asked her what she was going to do next, what were her ideas for the future—for they had grave anxieties for her—and she answered quietly: "I don't know, except that I feel I must go to Japan to complete my education." Mrs. Little presumed that the great bulk of the audience had been to China, and felt that affection for the Chinese which no other nation seemed to evoke in like measure. Even the Italians, who stood next in her regard, had not inspired in her the same degree of love and respect as the Chinese, and that although she had more than once been stoned and hustled by a Chinese mob. Therefore she rejoiced to see that the great Chinese people had joined the ranks of those who were fighting for the right against the united powers of evil, and had broken off relations with Germany.

At the request of the Chairman to initiate the discussion, Dr. Timothy Richard said he thought the best person to speak on the subject before them was the Chairman herself, for she had had a great deal to do with the formation of the Anti-Footbinding Society, and it would be noticed that it was indicated at the beginning of the interesting paper which they had heard that Ch'iu Chin wished ultimately to free the women from the cruel bondage in which their feet had been held for thousands of years.

Mr. Y. H. YAO said that during the events which led to the death of Ch'iu Chin he was spending his summer vacation at his home in Shaohsing. One of the heroine's purposes, he pointed out, was to establish military schools and colleges to supply the revolutionist army. It was unfortunate that the outbreak was premature, and that Ch'iu Chin was unprepared, so that she became a victim herself. If she had lived during the Revolution of 1911 she might have earned much glory in the history of the movement.

Mr. L. Y. CHEN, who had met Ch'iu Chin, was also prevailed upon to say a few words. He came from Kiangsu, he said, and he met Madame Ch'iu once at the house of Madame Hsü Hsi-lin. He was only a little boy at the time, so he could not remember much about the heroine, except that she was a very handsome woman. Most people thought that as she was a revolutionary, she could not be very affectionate, but in reality she was extremely tender-hearted and very fond of children. He remembered how kindly she talked to him and his little brother at the time.

Mr. G. WILLOUGHBY-MEADE said that what he had to say was in the nature of a question. Could it be said that in China, as in other Eastern countries, the subjection of women was almost a modern development? It was stated that other Oriental peoples placed restraints upon their women as a measure of precaution against outside elements of a rough character. Perhaps the character of Ch'iu Chin had various parallels in the old history of China before the days of the segregated ladies whose small feet brought so much misery. Another point that struck him was how much this heroine was handicapped by the utter lack of railway communication. Let them hope that that disability would not stand in the way of future development, and that China would reach that position which she certainly ought to have amongst the civilized nations of the world. (Applause.)

Mrs. LITTLE said, in reply to the last speaker, that the custom of footbinding was generally thought to be about a thousand years old; that being so, it was clear that Chinese women had not enjoyed much liberty for a very long period. But whether the custom originally started as a measure of precaution she did not know; she had never heard anyone in China give that explanation. As the binding of women's feet prevented their getting about, it necessarily affected their intellectual capacity; therefore the narrowing of women's intelligence in China was not a recent growth, but at least a thousand years old.

The CHAIRMAN then proposed a hearty vote of thanks to Dr. Giles, which was carried by acclamation.

Sir WALTER HILLIER remarked that the Chairman had invited them to give some experiences of their friendships with Chinese ladies. He was one of the old stagers in China, but he had never had the opportunity of meeting with any Chinese ladies, for, as Ch'iu Chin said, they always went into the back room on the arrival

of visitors. Being an official, he had also never had the opportunity of hearing anyone talk about revolutions; but Mrs. Little, on the other hand, had mixed with these revolutionary people. She was asking if any of them could say anything about other celebrated women in China. Well, there was a book that they all knew—"Lieh Nü Chuan," biographies of distinguished ladies in China—and when that book came to be brought up to date he felt sure that it would include an account of the work of Mrs. Little, who had done so much towards removing the evil of footbinding. The speaker proposed a vote of thanks to Mrs. Little for presiding, and this was carried amid applause.

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